The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

Since our Roll of Honour appeared last month we have received from one of our correspondents a valuable suggestion. This is, that the Roll should be printed on appropriate cards, which could be displayed in our churches and Sunday Schools. We propose to do this later when the Roll has received further expected additions. But, before it is finally done, it seems to us that our friends who are responsible for the sending of the congregational lists should strive for greater informity and fulness of particulars. It is not sufficiently descriptive to say "Lord Kitchener's Army" or "British Expeditionary Force," much less to omit even such general designations. The type to which our correspondents should conform in sending particulars is the following:—John Smyth, Private, 5th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles. That is to say, we should like, wherever possible, satisfactory information as regards name, rank, battalion, regiment, where soldiers are concerned, and corresponding information in the case of all naval men. Needless to say, the Roll, so far as its male representatives are concerned, should include only men who are members of the forces. The inclusion of munition and other war workers would make our Roll much larger than it now is.

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In December an appeal was made in these columns on behalf of an increased circulation for this Magazine. Although as yet adequate general response is not forthcoming, we have pleasure in announcing the accession of a new body of subscribers. The Domestic Mission, Stanhope Street, Belfast, was added at the beginning of this year to the congregations which collectively support the Magazine. Like First Belfast and Holywood, the Mission people have decided to take the Magazine, with the last page thereof used as a monthly calendar for local Church purposes. The Magazine thus localised will be available for propaganda. That is a plan of which we heartily approve, and would like to see widely followed. It ensures a constant demand for the Magazine, furthers the general object of the latter, while serving useful local ends. We heartily welcome our new ally, and trust that this Magazine will achieve for the Mission all its friends and supporters hope and wish.

Speaking of the Domestic Mission, we would like to call attention to the fact that its Annual Sermons and Meeting will be held on March 5th and 6th respectively. These events have more than customary interest, because the special preacher and speaker on this occasion will be the Rev. W. H. Drummond, B.A., who, before going to London to edit "The Inquirer," was so well known in the North of Ireland. Another interesting feature of his visit is the fact that he has consented to speak in the Central Hall, Belfast, on Friday evening, March 3rd, on the work of the Belgium Hospital Fund. During the war Mr. Drummond has been over on several occasions to Belgium and France in the interests of the above fund, and consequently will have matters of the deepest interest to report when he comes to Belfast. We hope for him a very pleasant and successful visit and for the Mission, at whose invitation he comes, a very fruitful anniversary.

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There has recently appeared in the columns of "The Christian World"—a widely-read religious weekly paper published in England—a very interesting article and correspondence thereon indicative of the growing desire for religious unity. Although ostensibly it represents an appeal made to the Free Churches of England to sink denominational differences and come together in one big denomination, there is much of wider interest and application. We have all been impressed by the fact of unity made possible in so many aspects of our national life by the present war. Many of us have long deplored the denominational differences responsible for so much ineffectiveness in religious undertakings. We have asked again and again: Why cannot we forget the secondary things on which we differ when there is so much of primary importance we all value and for which we might unitedly strive? It is good to find that the dissatisfaction we felt is shared by so many members of other religious denominations. For, while the article and subsequent correspondence in "The Christian World" show divergent views as to the methods by which unity may be effected, there is a striking consensus of opinion as to the vital need of such unity. Many correspondents emphasise the larger religious opportunities created by the war, and likely to follow upon its conclusion, but see no more prospect of using such opportunities speedily and well if present denominational antagonism continue than there would be of our achieving victory in the war if the present Allies were questioning and frustrating the efforts of each other, instead of demonstrating a deeper unity and a more ardent desire for common understanding and sympathy. But, granted the need of such unity, how is it to be secured? The first essential, as it seems to us, is simple: We must be ready to recognise and appreciate the good in every religious community. Even though we believe that to impose a creed is a mistake and inimical to progress, that must not determine our point of view, much less our attitude to other religious bodies. There are many who do find creeds helpful who, nevertheless, would not make them the basis of their union with others. The work done in common by the Free Churches of England is itself evidence to that end. Nor, again, must we so think of "orthodoxy" as to preclude the possibility of its participation in the unity for which we plead. Some so-called "orthodox" leaders have been and are the most devoted of workers on behalf of objects which are extra-denominational. One only needs to think of Charles Kingsley and Frederick Dension Maurice in the past, and of Bishop Gore and Canon Scott Holland in the present. Let us ever bear in mind the destination between *ecclesiastical* and *vital* unity. So long as we think in terms of the former, questions like creeds and no creeds, episcopacy and presbyterianism, ritual and no ritual, orthodoxy and heterodoxy, seem fundamental and of primary importance. Along those lines no unity is possible, as many frustrated attempts at unity testify. From that point of view, undue emphasis upon the absence of

creed is just as mistaken as insistence upon its imposition. But if what we really desire is a *vital* unity—if we are thinking not in the terms of a Church, but as regards the issues of life, then there is prospect of an ever-deepening and widening unity. That seems to be the conviction of an increasing number of earnest Christians in other communities. It must also be ours if we are to enter into, and realise the possibilities of, the fair and attractive fields of service for God and for man, which the present times make vivid to our spiritual vision.

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AT the stated meeting of the Belfast Presbytery in January the Rev. W. J. Archer tendered his resignation as minister of High Street Church, Holywood. In the course of his speech Mr. Archer said that "his difficulties had arisen since the war broke out, and he felt that there would be new problems to deal with in the not distant future, and, for the consideration of these, he desired a wider freedom than he could hope to have in connection with the Irish Presbyterian Church." In moving that Mr. Archer's resignation be accepted, the Rev. J. B. Wylie "said that in Mr. Archer they had a man of high ideals, sterling honesty of purpose, and great intellectual attainment. He heartily approved the step he had taken, and honoured him for the courage he had displayed."

* *

It is eighty-seven years since Dr. Cooke made the Presbyterian Church in Ireland one in which men who desired the moral and religious improvement of mankind could find no place. Even after such a lapse of time "the evil that he did lives after him," and one of the most scholarly men and one of the best ministers in the Presbyterian Church is forced to leave it in his desire for greater freedom to promote the advance of humanity. Mr. Archer's resignation is not only a blow to orthodox Presbyterianism in Ireland, but it is also a calamity to Ulster. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has but few men of Mr. Archer's type in her ranks, and his resignation is to be regretted by all who believe in the progressive improvement which religious freedom alone can bring to a community. Such resignations leave the Church more and more in the control of those who are limited in their range of scholarship and intelligence, those who are constitutionally lazy and content that this generation should be no better than the last, and those who are cunning enough to act a part and play down to the lower levels of public opinion. A minister of Christ should be a leader and a guide, encouraging his flock to try to ascend to the higher slopes of life, and not a mirror, reflecting the views of the multitude, such as the influence of Dr. Cooke has made him.

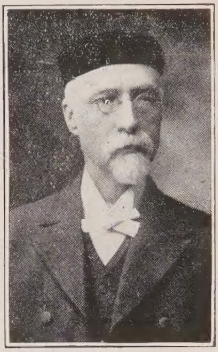
* *

In a review of Mr. Cope Cornford's book on the Navy—*With the Grand Fleet*—the reviewer quotes with approval Lord Charles Beresford's statement—"The Navy desires nothing but to be left to do its own work in its own way, governed and guided by naval authority," and proceeds—"It is a right for which every profession has to fight. The Bar fought and won its battle long ago, and is to-day a remarkable piece of human organization very admirably adjusted to its purpose; it is the palladium of the liberty of the individual. The Navy—the palladium of our national liberty—has had to fight the dark powers of politics and officialdom generation after generation. In quiet times it has lost the right to do its own work in its own way, but the mind of the Navy has lived on: you cannot strangle a mind even with red tape, or do more than hamper it by political foolishness, and in times of stress the Navy has regained its right. The Church long ago sold its freedom for a mess of pottage, and thes lovers of freedom at both extr eme revolted. Medicine has only recently come into contact with the deadening influence of the official, and hardly yet realizes the narrowness of his outlook and the mischief he is capable of doing to the nation should he be allowed to prevail."

Like the Church of England, above referred to, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Ireland in 1829 "sold its freedom for a mess of pottage." Nevertheless, the mind of ancient Presbyterianism has lived on in Mr. Archer and in others, and in due time Presbyterianism will regain its right.

RETIREMENT OF REV. M. S. DUNBAR, M.A.

On Sunday, December 26th, Mr. Dunbar preached his farewell sermon to the congregation at Downpatrick. He took for his text II. Thess. i. 2—"Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." After speaking of the grace of God and of Jesus Christ, the preacher proceeded: The apostle prays also that the peace



Rev. M. S. Dunbar, M.A.

of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ may be with those he is addressing. The peace of God: how shall we describe it? God alone knows what is that "far-off, divine event, to which the whole creation moves." We only know that there must be this divine purpose—if it is a rational world at all—that the Divine Being must have some end in view, that this strange life of ours, with its health and sickness, its pleasures and pains, its periods of happy activity in the field, the shop, and factory, and of friendly intercourse and helpful exchange of benefits in commerce with our brothers in all lands; and then again its periods of unhappy war, when all industry is turned into the making of warlike munitions to spread havoc and desolation in the lands and homes of our fellowmen and bring to premature death millions of the young and brave, and wreck the lives and hopes of millions of the bereaved—that this strange life must have a meaning. A world so ordained, a life so ordered, must be justified by the end in view, if it is not the freak and sport of some pitiless being. What is the meaning of it all? God alone knows, but there are signs to silence our fears and establish our faith. When we are in great trouble of mind, if we walk out into the silent night and look up to the starry heavens, a feeling that there is peace somewhere steals upon us, a calmness enters into the soul. We feel that He who made the world, who knows the end from the beginning, and what is being worked out by all the sufferings He lays upon us, as well as by all the sufferings men lay upon themselves, must share in the peace which He reveals to us in the starry heavens and the beauty of the earth. We gain the faith that love is at the heart of the universe, for that is a hope which we are on all sides encouraged to cherish, and it alone sustains us in the evils of the present. By faith we may have this precious gift—"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

Of the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we have knowledge from his words and his life. These beautiful words, "My peace I give unto you," fell from his lips in the darkest hour that can come to any man, when he was about to be betrayed by one of his disciples into the hand of his enemies, and to hear the fickle people, who had but a few days before shouted "Hosanna" at his approach, and spread their clothes in the way for him, cry, "Away with him, crucify him." But, disowned by the people, betrayed by a friend, deserted by his disciples, nailed to the cross by those he came to bless, Jesus yet had such peace in his soul that he could pray to his Father to forgive them, and could calmly commend his spirit into his

Father's hands. The peace of Christ had to be obtained by meditation, prayer, and obedience. He reached it by ways that are still open to us. By gazing with admiration on the lilies of the field, by thinking of the care that feeds the birds of the heaven, and overlooks not even the sparrow, he learned the love of God for all his creatures which encouraged the growth of a faith which could believe, even amidst the many ills of life, that all things are working together for good, and so peace entered his soul—a peace that was doubtless confirmed to him as to us, when in the mountain solitude and under the quiet stars he was alone in prayer to his Father. That peace may be ours by communion with his spirit, and by a like faith love and obedience. By meditating on his life it will flow from him to you, and show itself in patience, trustfulness, cheerful hope, calm joy, and may influence the lives of all with whom you come in contact.

My dear friends, I have laboured amongst you for nearly 22 years. I have preached a few great truths of the Christian Gospel that I have been able to understand myself, and could thoroughly believe, leaving much untold but which I trust some other teacher will unfold to you. I have tried in some measure to be a teacher and friend to you, though I may have left much undone. I have spent a happy time amongst you, without any jarring or misunderstanding. Perhaps the happiest twenty years of my life have been spent here, and the memory of the friends I have made, the roads I have traversed, the green fields and rounded hills I have so often gazed on, will be with me to the last. May some kind memories also be with you. I hope you will before very long get some one who will carry on the work more successfully than I have done, and to whom your hearts will be drawn. Then I must be content to be forgotten, though I trust always remembered as a friend. As I will still be in some sense a neighbour, I try to think as lightly as possible of the parting. Grace be unto you from God our Father, his large, generous love, sympathy and helpfulness flow into your hearts and make you in spirit his sons and daughters. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you, his beautiful truths be realized in your minds and their fruit be seen in your lives. The peace of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, the fears and doubts and anxious cares about this life or the next be far from you; and, if it be God's will, may outward peace and happiness be yours through life, but if dark and troubled days be your lot may you still have peace in your inmost soul in life and in death.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW IN MISSION WORK.

By Rev. F. Woolley.

To every serious nature the sadness of city life is always more impressive than its splendour, and no tender-hearted man or woman who has seen the hidden depths of that life can easily forget it. Go into your poorest streets, where poverty and crime unite to make life miserable; go to the casual wards of the workhouse, and then back again to where little children are sick and sorrowing; to the wretched homes where poor women are sewing and embroidering, working their fingers to the bone. Take in the wretchedness of it all—the vice and utter misery that you meet with, and you will not quickly forget the impression; and yet nothing is so deceptive as city life. Take the children, for instance. We are inclined to pity the poor little lads and lassies who run about with bare feet even on the bitterest winter day, and yet I question if in a general way those children are not healthier than many of the children who wear the stoutest shoes. We have got into the way of thinking that all life's happiness goes to the child born in "the terraced house," while none of it goes to the child born in "the court below." Watch those slum children, and see what amusement they will get out of an old soap box, while the child in the

terraced house is looking at them through the window with greedy envy in its little heart. Nature is kind to these neglected little ones, and, though we do well to protect them, and see to their welfare in every possible way, as well as bring good things into their lives, we need not greatly worry about them by contrasting their happiness with other more fortunate ones. Mission work, as we know it in Belfast to-day, is, comparatively speaking, a new thing. Every great denomination has now its Central Mission, but until about twenty years ago the only Protestant Mission in Belfast was the Domestic Mission. It may seem strange to some, but it is a fact, that until the Presbyterians allowed much of their Calvinism to become a dead letter they could not undertake the splendid work they are now doing. I wonder sometimes what the early fathers of the Non-Subscribing Church would think and say if they were able to return and hear our good brethren sing with true Methodistic fervour, "Whosoever heareth shout, shout the sound whosoever will may come." For thirty years our Domestic Mission stood practically alone in the mission field in Belfast, but all is changed to-day. One enterprise that I have been identified with has been the establishment of a "Newsboys' Club." A Committee was formed some two years ago for the purpose of organising this work, but it proved to be a disastrous failure. Most of these lads are Catholics, and within a very little time after the Club was started a rumour that the Club organizers were "Orangemen" quickly put an end to the Club; everything was smashed, and the unlucky caretaker thrown down the stairs, and the last remaining cup and saucer thrown after him. Other efforts made on behalf of these lads have ended much in the same way. Clothing has been provided for them, and, although it has been stamped, even the pawnbrokers have been deceived. It is the most difficult thing in the world to do good, and the greatest living miracle is the man or woman engaged in mission work to-day who is yet able to keep an unsoured heart, and remains "unwearied in well doing." I am reminded that on one occasion I was coming from a Newsboys' Club with a clerical friend, and the conversation turned on the desirability of getting one or two Catholic Priests to join the Committee. My friend would not hear of it, because, said he, "There can be no sort of co-operation between us. Fancy sitting there with men who believe we are going straight to h——." I replied, "Well, what about poor me?" Do you not think that I am due in that direction, and if so, how are you going to get me out of it?" "Oh, well," he replied, with a twinkle in his eye, "we shall introduce you to St. Peter as a Non-Subscribing Presbyterian; we shall not mention the word Unitarian, and it will be all right. If we said Unitarian it would lead to unprofitable discussion, and might lead to difficulties." I was once attending a gathering of clergy and others, engaged in social work, at the Carlton Café, and, after tea, before the meeting began, two or three other mission workers and myself were sitting in a corner by ourselves, when Bishop D'Arcy, who was in the chair, began with, "We will now open our meeting by asking our friend, Mr. Woolley, to lead us in prayer." The point in this story lies in the fact that one of my ministerial brethren there, in preaching the previous Sunday, had warned his hearers to "beware of Unitarian prayers." My own immediate friends knew of this, and the looks I received did not add to the necessary feeling of reverence.

Roll of Honour.

ADDITIONAL NAMES.

BANBRIDGE.

Private Joseph M'Keown, Royal Horse Artillery Woolwich.

Nurse Matilda Shanks, Queen Alexandra's Indian Medical Nursing Staff, Malta.

LARNE.

Corporal David Fergus Pinkerton, R.E.

MEMORIAL NOTICES.

MR. ALEXANDER GALBRAITH, Glenarm.

We regret to record the death, at the early age of 36 years, of Alexander Galbraith, a very useful member of the Glenarm Congregation, one of those whom any Church can ill afford to lose. The sad event took place at his residence, Main Street, Glenarm, on Wednesday, 12th January. The deceased, who was of a bright, cheerful disposition, was a general favourite with all classes in the community, as was evidenced by the large concourse of people which followed his remains to their last resting place in the old burying-ground surrounding the Meeting-house which he loved so well. Service was conducted in the home, the Meeting-house, and at the graveside by his minister, Rev. J. A. Miskimmin, B.A., who, in the course of a brief address, referred to the many good qualities of the deceased, his kind and helpful disposition, his regularity in attendance at public worship, and the great interest he at all times displayed in the welfare of the Glenarm Congregation. The speaker expressed the wish that the example of their departed friend would furnish an incentive to other young men to show a similar fidelity to duty and a desire to make their lives of some service to their fellow-men. We tender our respectful sympathy to the relatives, and say to them, "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."

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MRS. MILLIKEN, Ballyclare.

The passing away of our oldest member, Mrs. Milliken, which was briefly announced in the last number of this paper, was keenly felt not only in our own small community, but in and around our town generally. The following is but one of many tributes to her memory reported in the Press:—

"The news of the death of Mrs. Mary A. Milliken, which occurred at her residence, Greenmount Terrace, Ballyclare, caused a feeling of the most profound regret amongst her wide circle of friends, and removed the most respected and the oldest inhabitant. Deceased had almost completed the ninety-third year of her age. Nearly all her long life was spent in Ballyclare, and no one had seen more changes in the town and amongst its inhabitants. She was a truly gifted woman, and possessed an insatiable thirst for knowledge. Familiar with the works of most of the great writers, and particularly the poets, her powers of memory were remarkable. A most proficient reader of works in the Scotch dialect, she was familiar with the poems of the great Robert Burns, and in conversation many an apt quotation was unerringly given. In the old days, before there was a railway connection between Ballyclare and Belfast, her husband was the owner of the 'bus which carried passengers between the two places. Many could relate the consideration of deceased for their comfort while waiting for the 'bus starting, and often for the journey. Notwithstanding her long life, she remained mentally and physically active up till the last. She took a great interest in all the events of the present great war, being always optimistic as to the result. Her many acts of kindness will never be known, everything being done in her own quiet and unassuming manner. In her the poor had a friend, not only in material gifts, but her cheerful disposition brought cheer wherever she went. A member of the Unitarian Church, she was a regular attender at the services in the (Old) Presbyterian Meeting-house, Ballyclare. Deceased is survived by three sons and five daughters, her husband having predeceased her about 24 years ago.

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MRS. HUGH ROBERT M'ROBERT.

We regret to announce the death of Mrs. M'Robert, widow of Hugh Robert M'Robert, The Square, Ballynahinch, who passed away at the residence of her son-in-law, Mr. Robert Dick, Garry,

Ballymoney, on January 7th, aged 64 years, and was interred in the family burying ground attached to Rademon Meeting-house Her demise was somewhat unexpected, as few regarded her illness as being of a serious nature. Her interest in everything connected with the Non-subscribing Church was deep and enduring. To its funds she subscribed generously. She acted as a collector for the Orphan Society in her own district, and took much trouble to strengthen its resources. Of the Rademon congregation she was a most loyal member and zealous supporter. No effort made in the interest of this Worshipping Society but commanded her sympathy and encouragement. Indeed her days were full of loving deeds and charitable acts. It was not her habit to "sound a trumpet." Her kindness was known only to the recipients, and to the "Father which seeth in secret." She was a model of what a wife and mother ought to be. Greatly blessed were those whose youthful steps were guided by her hands. Mrs. M'Robert was a daughter of the Manse, her father being the Rev. Joseph M'Fadden, who ministered in succession to our congregations at Ballymoney and Ballyclare. She leaves three children to mourn her loss—Mrs. Robert Dick, William M'Robert, Ulster Bank, Belfast, and Joseph M'F. M'Robert, Ulster Bank, Killybegs.

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MR. JAMES SLOANE.

By the death of Mr. James Sloane the cause of liberal thought has lost a loyal friend and supporter. He was born at Park View, Ballymacbrennan, near Lisburn, on his father's farm. He was an only son, and at his father's death succeeded to the farm, where he remained until he retired from the business fifteen years ago. Here he made for himself a name amongst the whole of the farmers in the locality as a skilful agriculturalist, and his counsel and advice were eagerly sought for on farming matters by men from far and near. He discovered the special virtues of "crested dog's-tail" grass-seed, and selected it with the utmost care from the seed of the general crop, and sowed it apart, and invented special machinery, particularly for cleaning it and keeping it separate from other seeds. The seed is used for producing fine lawn grass and for improving the farmer's general crop. Some very small sales were effected locally, but, deeming it worthy of a wider celebrity, he took a sample to London, which, though only sufficient to fill two small carts, realized £400. In recent years it has been sold at £12 to £13 per cwt., and the produce of a single farm has been known to realize £1,000 in one year. He had the mechanical and engineering instinct, and produced various labour-saving appliances. For some years he carried on dairy farming, and was a popular Poor-Law Guardian of Lisburn. With a view to widening his knowledge, he spent some months in America. He was all his life an earnest advocate of Ultra Radical and Democratic political principles. In religion he was all his life a Non-Subscribing Presbyterian, and died in that faith. For some time he attended the ministry of the late Dr. Montgomery. Afterwards he became a member of the Moneyrea Congregation, and the late Rev. W. Bannister said of him very truly that "he was a man of great intelligence and of marked individuality of character." He remained in connection with Moneyrea Congregation up to some time after the death of the late Rev. R. Lyttle, of whom he was a great admirer. More recently he became a member of York Street Congregation, Belfast, during the active ministry there of the Rev. Alexander O. Ashworth. He descended from the same family as the celebrated Sir Hans Sloane,* who was the founder of the institution which afterwards developed into the British Museum, and after whom Sloane Square is named. Fifteen years ago James Sloane sold his farm and lovely house and grounds at Park View, and took up residence in Belfast

*President of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Physician to Queen Anne.

and devoted most of his time to reading. He was 76 years of age at his death, and was buried in the family burying ground at Drumbo on Saturday, 8th January, 1916, by his friend and pastor, Rev. Alexander O. Ashworth. He leaves two sisters, who feel his loss acutely, and his death is mourned by many friends in the neighbourhood of Lisburn and in Belfast.

ALEXANDER O. ASHWORTH.

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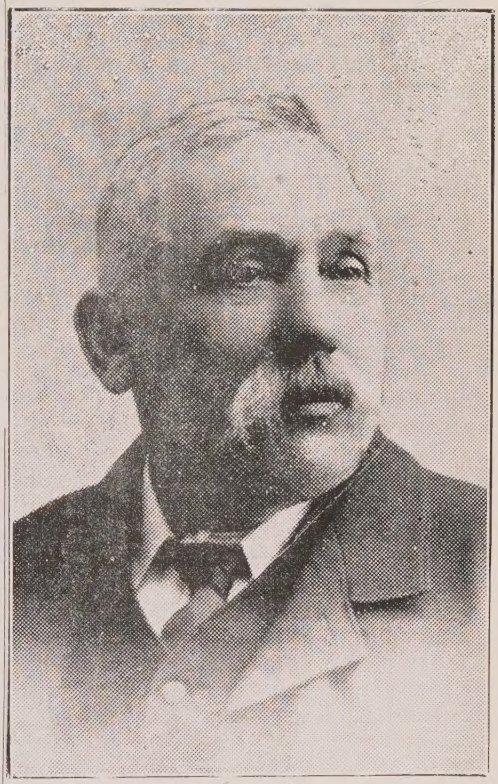
MR. JOHN THOMPSON, Newry.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. John Thompson, Master Painter and Decorator, of Hill Street, Newry, which occurred on Sunday, 9th January, after a very brief illness. The deceased gentleman was the head of a firm established close upon 100 years in the town of Newry, and carried on a large business, which included contracts with the Great Northern (Ireland) Railway and H.M. War Department. He was one of the best known men in the town, and esteemed by all classes and creeds. His kindly nature endeared him to many to whom his death is a great loss. He was all his life connected with the First Presbyterian (Unitarian) Church, Newry, and as a Trustee and Member of Committee he evinced a great interest in its welfare. The congregation, also, at Warrenpoint, found in him a warm and generous friend, he being also a trustee and Member of Committee of the church there. Always zealous in promoting our cause, he spared no opportunity in helping forward in every way the various institutions. In 1882 he married Lizzie, the only daughter of the late Mr. James Colvin, also a warm member of the Newry Congregation, and Superintendent of the Sunday School. His widow survives him, and to her, as also to her three sons and daughter, much sympathy is extended. One son, now serving in the Machine Gun Section of the R.I.R. in France, was unable to be present at the funeral which took place on Wednesday afternoon at the Old Meeting House Green, Newry. The funeral cortege was of a large and representative character, and testified to the great esteem in which the deceased gentleman was held. A brief service was held in the home, conducted by Rev. Alex. Gordon, M.A. and Rev. Geo. J. Slipper. The remains were conveyed to the church, where a service was held, conducted by Revs. Alex. Gordon, J. A. Kelly and Geo. J. Slipper. Mr. Gordon read portions of Scripture, Mr. Slipper, pastor loci, gave an impressive address,



Block kindly lent by *Newry Reporter*

MR. JOHN THOMPSON, NEWRY.

and Mr. Kelly led in prayer. Appropriate hymns were sung, Mrs. Slipper presiding at the organ. The cortege then moved on to the Old Meeting House Green, where the committal service was conducted by Mr. Slipper, after which the Rev. H. B. Swanzy, M.A., Vicar of St. Mary's, Newry, conducted the last solemn ritual of the Masonic Order, of which the deceased gentleman was a leading member.

On the following Sunday a memorial service was held at noon, and a sermon preached by Rev. G. J. Slipper. Some of the favourite hymns of the deceased gentleman, who took a warm interest in the choir, of which he was a member, were sung at this service, at the close of which the Dead March in Saul was played, the congregation reverently standing.

By Mr. Thompson's death the Newry congregation has lost another of its members to whom it owes so much for the personal and generous interest in its welfare.

BY THE WAY.

ONE of the most striking things about our war expenditure is the extraordinarily high wages it has brought to a certain section of the working classes. Some of us who belong to that unfortunate part of the professional classes, whose income has remained stationary, or has even diminished in the face of an ever-increasing cost of living, are inclined, in consequence, to be envious, because we are convinced that we could use a little extra money far more advantageously than the working classes.

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All sorts of tales are going round concerning the workers' extravagance True enough, few of them are making a really good use of their money; but I hear on all sides that they are not all wasting it on drink. The great majority seem to be spending it on stocking their homes with new furniture. Although this is not the best, it is certainly not a bad, thing to do. Good furniture and comfortable homes play a most important part in the development of self-respect and responsibility.

* *

But the buying of furniture has its funny side. I hear, on excellent authority, of the mother of a prosperous family of Clydebank workers buying a £120 grand piano, and casually remarking that it would do for the girls to "strum on."

One woman, however, who lives within a mile of our City Hall, had, I fear, not been using her increased income wisely and well, and when she heard that her husband was returning from the front she was at a loss how to receive him. Evidently he would expect to find his home well stocked with new furniture, but unfortunately it had been almost stripped bare of its original fittings. But sympathetic neighbours came to the rescue, and furbished up her home with the loan of their new furniture, so that when her husband returned and saw his brand new home, being carefully told by his wife how much she had paid for this article and that, his heart was rejoiced, and he must have gone back to the front strong and eager to fight for the country which had done so much for him.

* *

This generous loaning of their possessions to one another is one of the most admirable characteristics of the working classes. I am reminded of that little girl who was sent by her mother to borrow Mrs. Smith's beef-bone, as they were making soup. "Very sorry," said Mrs. Smith, "but I am using it myself to-day, and it's promised to Mrs. Brown to-morrow, but you can have it the day after."

* *

One of the best books prompted by the war which I have seen is "The Pentecost of Calamity," by Mr. Owen Wister, an American writer. Mr. Wister knows Germany very well, and declares that before the war it seemed to him to be the happiest and best organized country in the world. Unfortunately that happiness and organization were not the spontaneous creation of a free people, but were imposed from above in the interests of a military absolutism, with the result that they were purchased at the cost of mental and spiritual slavery.

* *

Mr. Wister well illustrates this point by describing, among other things, an excellent musical festival organized for school children, which he witnessed, and which puts to shame our own educational methods.

He proceeds: "I thought: suppose a soul, arrived on earth from another world . . . were given a choice after a survey of the nations, which it should be born in and belong to? In May, June, and July, 1914, my choice would have been, not France, not England, not America, but Germany.

It was on the seventh day of June, 1914, that Frankfurt assembled her children in the opera house, to further their taste and understanding of Germany's supreme national art. Exactly eleven months later, on May 7, 1915, a German torpedo sank *The Lusitania; and the cities of the Rhine celebrated this also for their school children.*"

* * *

It would be ridiculous to belittle Germany's wonderful capacity for method and organization. We could do with more of it ourselves. But I do feel that while Liberty Hall, with its untidiness and extravagance and muddle is very bad, it is infinitely preferable to a workhouse, no matter how generous the fare and how beautiful the accommodation, with its subjection of all mental and spiritual initiative. For there is always the possibility that Liberty Hall may develop an organization as good as that of the workhouse, but there is no chance of the workhouse developing the freedom of Liberty Hall.

* *

It is strange, by the way, how circumstances alter cases. The romantic young woman at home looked out of the window one night, and, thinking of her soldier sweetheart, declared, "Ah! to think that the same bright moon is shining on us both." While the soldier sweetheart, engaged that night in the perilous task of laying wires in front of the trenches, bitterly exclaimed, "Confound that moon! it will be the death of me."

VIATOR.

A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship: he who plans kindness gathers love.

Reports.

Unity Guild.—A more pleasant and sociable gathering of young people than the hundred who met in the Central Hall at the tenth Annual Soiree it would have been hard to find. Under the able management, of Mr. Hugh Erskine and his assistants, the company was seated at the whist tables without a trace of confusion, and play was only delayed by the arrival of a few late comers. A little after 10 o'clock the bell rang for the last time, and the scores having been added up and the prizes distributed, the majority retired upstairs for supper. A few of the men, however, remained below to clear away the tables and lift the carpet for the dancing which followed, under the direction of Mr. Albert Hunter. He carried out the Committee's wishes to the letter, and so arranged that the last strains of the final waltz died away on the stroke of midnight. Throughout the evening everyone seemed bent on getting their fill of enjoyment, and the whole programme was carried through in the best of spirits. The one criticism which found expression was that the proceedings terminated too soon. It is pleasant to think that this happy evening not only gave enjoyment to those present, but that part of its proceeds go to benefit the wounded soldiers. This latter thought must have animated those who so generously gave subscriptions and bought tickets without the least intention of being present.

It is, of course, impossible to say what kind of concert would have been given in aid of the Mission if all those who originally promised their help had been present; but it is certain that those who did give their services left nothing to be desired. The items could not have been more appropriately chosen, and received the appreciation they thoroughly deserved. The audience, which numbered 150, listened with careful attention to the Rev. F. Woolley, who spoke, previous to the concert, on "Sunshine and Shadow in Mission Work." He ranged over the whole field of Missionary effort

in Belfast, past and present, and showed his sense of humour by the deft touches with which he brought out the lighter side of his somewhat sombre subject. A synopsis of his paper appears elsewhere in these columns. It is hoped there will be a good muster on the 16th February in the Central Hall to hear the lantern lecture which the Rev. E. Savell Hicks has kindly promised to give. Mr. Hicks, who is greatly interested in the kind of work the Guild undertakes, is coming from Dublin specially to address the meeting, and every effort should be made to secure him a good audience.

* *

Belfast : First Congregation.—It is characteristic of the spirit which animates people when engaged on war charity that a Canon of St. Ann's Cathedral arranged the greater part of the Variety Concert which constituted the January entertainment organised here in aid of St. Dunstan's Hostel. We congratulate him and his troupe on the excellence of the programme supplied and ourselves on having obtained their co-operation. The Patriotic Tableau and Recruiting Song, with which the entertainment opened, were carried out by members of the congregation and Sunday School. As the result of this effort another £35 will be forwarded for the amelioration of the blinded soldiers. It is evident, therefore, that our people are not suffering from the particular form of "lunacy" referred to by "Viator' in the last issue.

Belfast—First Presbyterian Band of Hope.—At the monthly meeting of the Society, on January 12th. a lecture on "Belgium" was delivered by the President, Rev. H. J. Rossington. There was a very good attendance of members and friends, who expressed very warm approval of the fine set of slides thrown upon the screen by the lanternist, Mr. George Hill. About a hundred slides illustrated the many objects of artistic and architectural interest to be found in Belgium prior to the war, together with views of the picturesque Ardennes districts. Later, some forty or fifty slides depicted the marked change in scene and activity brought about by the war. At the conclusion of the lecture a collection was taken at the door of the hall. This was so well supported that, after deducting the bare expenses incurred in using the lantern, the sum of £1 14s. was available for the Belgian Hospital Fund, an amount since gratefully acknowledged by Mrs. Bernard Allen.

* *

All Souls', Belfast.—During Advent a series of sermons was given by the Minister (the Rev. E. H. Pickering, B.A., Oxon.), on "Jesus Christ and Modern Problems." During this period the choir, under the capable leadership of Mr. A. R. Teasdale-Griffith, A.R.C.O., rendered special Advent music, consisting of comprehensive selections from Handel's "Messiah," commencing with a special musical service on the evening of December 5.

On Christmas Day the Minister preached a sermon on St. Joseph, the Guardian of the Babe, the anthem being Handel's Hallelujah Chorus. The offertory was on behalf of the Serbian Children's Fund, and amounted to £8 17s. At this service and at evening service on the following day, Christmas carols were rendered by the choir.

On Sunday morning, December 26, Rev. M. Watkins, of Mountpottinger, preached, after examining the Sunday School children. The results of the examination were most satisfactory, all the scholars entered passing, three gaining distinction.

On December 31st the usual New Year's Eve Party was held, and was most enjoyable. The minister officiated at the usual Watch-night Service.

During the Christmas Services the church was beautifully decorated by members of the Decoration Committee.

* *

Belfast Domestic Mission.—At Christmas there was a distribution of clothing, tea, and coal to poor people. On Thursday, January 6th, the annual congregational party was held, when one hundred and fifty persons sat down

to an excellent tea, and afterwards assembled in the school-room for the usual entertainment, presided over by Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D. On the following evening the Sunday School scholars were entertained, the Chairman on this occasion being Rev. E. H. Pickering, B.A., who gave the scholars an address they will long remember. After the address the prizes for attendance and good conduct were distributed, also fifteen silver medals to that number of scholars who are connected with our Young Worshippers' League for prompt and regular attendance at Sunday School and the Sunday morning service.

* *

Dromore.—Under the auspices of Dromore Unitarian Choir, a subscription dance was given in the Rampart Street Schoolroom on Thursday evening, 30th December. The event had for its object the raising of money for "Our Boys at the Front Fund," and also the Servian Relief Fund, and, to say the least, the undertaking was a high financial success: indeed dozens of applications for tickets had to be refused on account of the strictly limited amount of accommodation at the disposal of the promoters. Dancing was commenced at 7-30 o'clock, under the directorship of Mr. Wm. Ruddock, who very capably and efficiently played the role of Master of Ceremonies. The musical portion was well sustained by Messrs. Ferris and Bryson (violinists) and Mrs. Kerr (pianist). At intervals during the evening the company was entertained to tea and light refreshment, the cost of which, it may be stated, was defrayed by several generous friends of the congregation, so that the entire receipts might be exclusively devoted to the above-mentioned funds, and in this respect, it is pleasing to note, the Committee attained the object in view. The catering was exceedingly well carried out, being under the superintendence of Mrs. Mulligan, Mrs. Ruddock, Mrs. M'Veigh (Rampart St.), Mrs. M'Veigh (Gallows Street), and Miss Clarke, assisted by Mr. John Mulligan.

Holywood.—A well-attended meeting of the Total Abstinence Society was held on Tuesday, January 11th, when the Rev. S. W. Chambers, B.A., was the speaker. This, unfortunately, will probably be Mr. Chambers' last appearance at our meetings, as he has now left Holywood, and will be shortly leaving the country. We have on many occasions been indebted to him for much appreciated help. During the evening, songs were rendered by Miss Mabel Andrews, Mr. James M'Kisack, and Mr. James Shannon, and violin solos by Miss Munster.

The Annual Sunday School Soiree was held on Thursday, January 13th. About 70 children sat down to tea, and afterwards the attendance swelled to about 120. A very good programme, including a sketch entitled "Our Betty," was carried out entirely by the Sunday School scholars, and was much enjoyed by young and old. Father Christmas, impersonated by Mr. Hugh Erskine, duly appeared, and distributed gifts from the Christmas tree, after which the elder scholars remained for games. Everyone had a right good time, and teachers and scholars are very grateful to our good friends who provided the gifts for the Christma tree.

Collections on behalf of the Red Cross Fund were taken on Sunday, January 16th, with the result that £7 12s. 7d. has been forwarded.

* *

Killinchy.—A special service of intercession was held on Sunday, January 16th, when prayers were said for the soldiers and sailors who are fighting their country's battles on the various battle fronts. At a critical time in the fortunes of the country we are glad to record the presence of a large congregation, especially as they were almost exclusively our own members. A special collection was made on behalf of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John to be applied to the sick and wounded of the King's forces. The sum of £11 was realised.

The Choir sang as an anthem John Oxenham's hymn—

"Lord God of Hosts, whose mighty hand,
Dominion holds on sea and land."

The Rev. D. J. Williams conducted the service, and preached an appropriate sermon on the subject for the day.

* *

Larne.—On the afternoon of Sunday, 19th December last, a most enjoyable rendering of Jamouneau's Sacred Cantata, "The Saviour of Men," was given in the Old Meeting House by an augmented choir, under the leadership of Mr. Edward Holmes, who has thereby added to his already high reputation as a musician. There was a crowded audience, additional seats having to be placed along the aisles and elsewhere. One most agreeable feature was a short organ recital previous to the service, given by Mrs. Duffell, Organist of Gardenmore Presbyterian Congregation. After singing and prayer by Rev. J. Kennedy, the Cantata was proceeded with, and from first to last the attention of the vast congregation was firmly rivetted. The excellent chorus singing was thoroughly appreciated, and it is no more than justice to say that the soloists—Mrs. W. J. Wilson (née Morrow), Miss Sutherland, Miss Lucy Gault, and Miss Gilliland, all of Larne, with Messrs. Spence and R. Scott, of Belfast, sang with correctness and high devotional feeling. The choir, augmented by members of other choirs in town, was well balanced, and gave evidence of the care and capability expended by Mr. Holmes in the training thereof, the numbers, "If with all your hearts," "All we like sheep, etc.," "The veil of the Temple" being so exquisitely rendered as to make every music lover present wish for more frequent opportunities of hearing such a perfect choir. At the close of the Cantata the Minister acknowledged the presence and services of friends from other congregations, and announced a collection in aid of the Servian Relief Fund, which, having been taken up, Mr. Scott sang the sacred song, "Nazareth," in good style. The singing of the hymn "Lord dismiss us" and benediction by Mr. Kennedy, concluded a service as profitable and devotional as it was beautiful and artistic. The congregation retired to the strains of the "Hallelujah Chorus," brilliantly played by Mr. Duffell, whose other contributions during the afternoon included "Christmas Offertorie" (Lemmens) and "Noel" (Guilmarsh).

On the evening of Monday, January 7th, the scholars attending the Sunday School here were entertained in their schoolroom in customary fashion. But as the young folk had given up their usual summer trip to Garron Tower, and had allowed their monthly contributions in aid of the expense thereof to be added to the fund raised by Unitarian Sunday Schools to provide a motor ambulance for the removal of wounded soldiers to hospital, a Xmas Tree was provided in addition, mainly through the efforts of Miss Bailie. The tree, laden with little souvenirs, when decorated and lighted up, was a spectacle as pretty as it was unusual. After tea, games, selections on gramaphone, kindly lent by Mr. R. Foulis, St. Nicholas, Santa Claus, or Father Christmas, arrayed in suitable garb, and "white with hoary hairs," and admirably impersonated by Mr. T. W. Pullin, distributed the gifts, with short speeches, replete with gentle humour, to pupils and teachers, even the Minister not being forgotten. Needless to say that, under the direction of Mr. Frank Wright (Superintendent), the teachers, aided by a few friends, worked energetically for the happiness of the young people. and that all present had a very enjoyable time.

BIRTH.

JOHNSTON — On January 11th, 1916, to Thomas and Alice Johnston, of Ballyhemlin, a son.

DEATHS.

M'ILMURRAY—At Belfast, on Monday, Jan. 10th, 1916, Mary Agnes (neé Anderson), wife of James M'Ilmurray, aged 24 years. (Organist for some years at Ballyhemlin Meeting House). Interred January 13th at Ballyhalbert, County Down.

SLOANE—On January 6th, 1916, at 89 Malone Avenue, Belfast, after a few days' sickness from bronchitis and pneumonia, James Sloane, formerly of Park View, Ballymacbrennan, near Lisburn, aged 76

GALBRAITH—January 12th, at his residence, Main Street, Glenarm, Alexander Galbraith, younger son of John Galbraith, Tully, Glenarm, aged 36 years.

BELL—January 14th, at her father's residence, Ballydown, Banbridge, Bessie Elma Sterling, youngest daughter of Samuel and Annie Bell.

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